DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 091 899 EC 062 056

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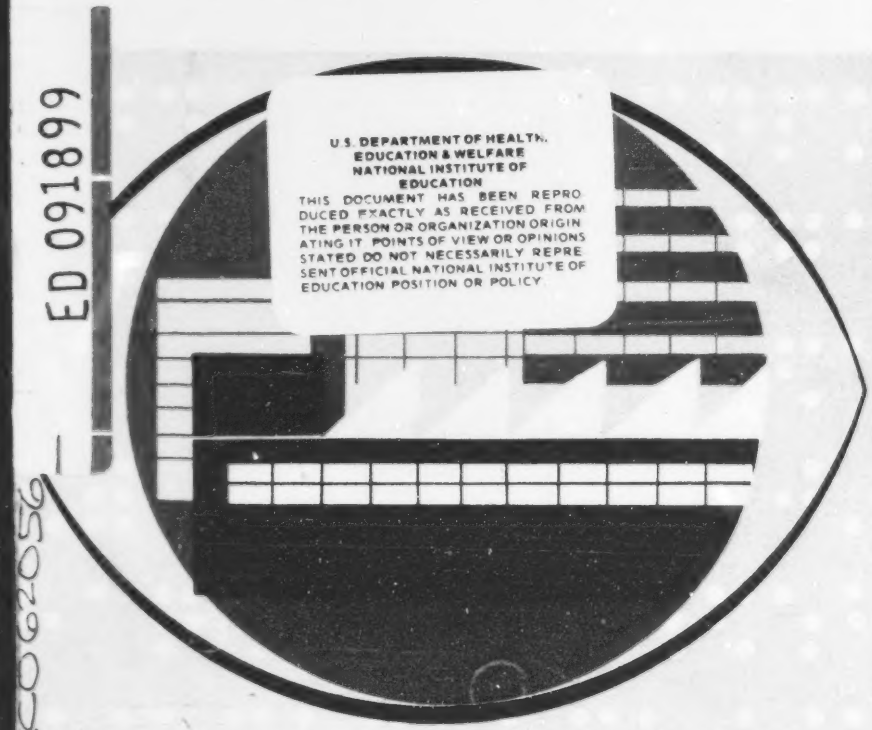
TITLE	General Principles of Organisation of Production.
INSTITUTION	All-Russia Society for the Blind, Moscow (USSR).
PUB DATE	72
NOTE	24p.; Materials for the Session of the Executive Committee of the World Union for the Welfare of the Blind; For related documents, see EC 062 052-055, 057, and 058
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.75 HC-$1.50 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS	*Employment; *Exceptional Child Services; Foreign Countries; Historical Reviews; *Visually Handicapped; *Vocational Education; Vocational Rehabilitation
IDENTIFIERS	All Russia Society for the Blind; *Union of Soviet Socialist Republics; USSR

ABSTRACT

Briefly described with accompanying photographs are development of employment opportunities for the blind and the current status of production by the blind in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. It is explained that with the founding of the All-Russia Society for the Blind in 1925, efforts were made to train the blind in workshops. The return of numerous skilled and professional soldiers blinded in World War II is said to have directed rehabilitation efforts from traditional jobs such as weaving baskets to provision for training according to each individual's choice. Noted is current employment of 55,400 blind persons in establishments run by the society, 13,300 of the blind in state factories, and 8,000 blind in agriculture. Preparation is said to include vocational training in special schools, acquisition of work skills in secondary polytechnic classes, and learning self-care skills in work rehabilitation schools. Training of workers in the society's enterprises is seen to involve a theoretical or practical course and the following steps: orientation, mastery of technique and operation, and independent work. Noted is growth of the original small workshops to 247 factories or industries producing items such as electro-radio-lighting articles, and having 200 - 400 workers. The factories are said to net large profits which are used to employ physicians and psychologists, and to construct production, cultural, residential and welfare facilities. Cited is incidence of the blind in specialized schools and professions such as the law. (MC)

A. Yazvina

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF ORGANISATION OF PRODUCTION



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THE ALL-RUSSIA SOCIETY FOR THE BLIND

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF ORGANISATION OF PRODUCTION

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MATERIALS FOR THE SESSION
OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF THE WORLD UNION
FOR THE WELFARE OF THE BLIND

MOSCOW—1972

In the Soviet state the work not only provides material boons but is also a source of moral satisfaction, a living necessity of each person.

Work for the blind people deprived of visual perception of life is a source of happiness, it helps them to feel the life more fully, to apply their abilities, knowledge and skill in the production of material values.

There were 300,000 absolutely blind in tsarist Russia and about the same amount of people with a visual accuity up to 0,08. The great number of blind, lack of proper treatment of blidness and preventive measures, material insecurity and poverty of the blind, lack of perspectives of employment and education placed the blind outside the society. Blindness in Russia was a grave national evil.

After the October Revolution the very attitude towards the blind changed radically. The Soviet state rendered all possible help to the blind, it supported their initiative of creating the Society for the blind. Beginning with 1922 local associations of the blind and handicraft workshops for their employment began to appear with the assistance of the organs of the People's Commissariate for Social Security.

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On April 6, 1925, the First All Russia Congress of the Blind founded the All-Russia Society for the Blind (V. O. S.). Later on national societies for the blind were created in other union republics.

The blind man was becoming a full-fledged citizen of the country, a person useful to society. Secondary and higher educational establishments had thrown their doors wide open to the blind.

One of the main tasks that faced the All-Russia Society for the blind was the employment of all the blind who wished to work.

Thanks to the help of the Soviet government which allocated the Society considerable grants, training-production shops appeared and the search began for better ways of employment of the blind. As a rule, these shops were small with primitive equipment and predominantly manual labour. They mainly wove pieces of summer furniture, baskets, boxes and other articles from twigs, made brushes, ropes and felt boots.

During the Second World War the Society received new members, war invalids. These were, chiefly, intelligent, skilled specialists. The inflow of blind people confronted the Society with a major social and political problem. It was not only necessary to find jobs for them, but also to see to it that each blind man could find his place in life and get moral satisfaction. All of them were people with life experience in a certain educational and vocational field, wishing to use their knowldege and experience in the manufacture of sophisticated and interesting articles.

The Society's workshops developed and gained in strength with every year. In 1951 the income rose so considerably that the Society was in a position to dispense with the state's subsidy. The Society spends its own in-

come on reconstruction and streamlining of production, on the expansion of capital construction and on footing social and living measures.

In 1963 the Society's major task — employment of all the blind who wished to work — was successfully fulfilled.

At present, in the Russian Federation of the total of 76,800 blind, 55,400 work at the Society's establishments and institutions, 13,300 — at state industrial enterprises and 8,000 — in agriculture.

The experienced gained has shown that training-production enterprises is the correct form of the employment of the blind that has justified itself. They provide all the necessary cultural and living conditions for the blind.

The main principles on which the work of the Society is based are: development of such a technological process which will make it possible to make use chiefly of the labour of the blind, development and introduction of special devices which not only make the work easier for the blind but also allows it to be used in various production operations and a guarantee of hundred per cent safety of labour.

A system of preparing blind people for production activity, their vocational training and rational employment has been developed on the basis of extensive practical experience of the society and introduced into practice.

As a rule, training-production enterprises admit graduates from the special schools for blind children as well as blind adults who underwent training at school for restoration of working capacity.

In secondary schools with polytechnic classes, pupils acquire work skills and are helped to realize their individual abilities so that they could chose trade most advantageous to them.

In the last few years the work rehabilitation schools acquired well-earned recognition. For three or four months the blind learn how to find their way about, look after themselves, they are trained in housekeeping, in the use of house appliances, taught to read and write braille and to do work.

At the Society's enterprises a blind person choses a trade for himself with due account of the recommendation of the medical and labour expert commission.

Professional training of the workers includes theoretical and practical course, the term of which depending on the trade chosen. The entire course falls into three periods: acquaintance of the worker with the enterprise and production process; mastering main working techniques and operations; independent work. A separate syllabus for earch trade determines the number of hours for theoretical and practical studies.

But the study process does not end tere, since every worker can raise his qualification at the production-technological courses, schools for studying advanced methods of work, schools of communist labour organised at the enterprise. At these schools and courses the workmen learn entirely new or allied trades, are given technical education and draw upon the experience of innovators. In the process of raising qualification, the blind workman receives sound theoretical and practical knowledge based on the study of progressive technology, modern plant and scientific organisation of labour.

Small workshops have grown into large-scale highly-mechanised production capacities which not only put out sophisticated articles but which have given birth to new industrial branches manufacturing electro-radio-lighting articles, engineering products and instruments, and also mechanised cardboard production. The list of articles put

out by the Society's enterprises is long and varied. It includes electrical motors, step-down transformers, low- and high-voltage apparatus, lighting fittings, various devices for electrical networks, spare parts for motor cars, tractors and farm machines and so on.

The 247 Society's enterprises of which 60 per cent have from 200 to 400 workers and 20 per cent over 500 put out products to the tune of 450 million rubles.

There is extensive co-operation between the Society's factories and state-run industries. Over 180 factories are working in co-operation with the country's major works either fully or partially, delivering to their assembly lines separate parts and units. This kind of contacts with the state-run enterprises is very fruitful, since it grants the Society's factories steady orders, the necessary material and technical backing and a guaranteed market for ready-made products.

It stands to reason that the change-over to the manufacture of such complicated products called for major engineering and technical training. That is why along with the blind engaged in the main technological process there work at the Society's factories people who can see normally: designers, technologists, mechanics, highly-skilled workers. Whereas the number of the blind workers on the main technological operations comes up to 70 per cent and sometimes to 90, the figure for the enterprise as a whole is 60—65 but not less than 50 per cent.

Those who ever been to one of the Society's factories will give its due to the engineering thought and effort that has been put into organisation of production for the blind.

How to find a way for the blind person to perform this or that production operation or operate a mechanical press or lathe or use a tool without fear and with ease.

This calls for a serious technological preparation of production. Designers develop enclosed stamps and devices which are then made at the tool shop of an enterprise. Workmen themselves make a lot of rationalising suggestions how to mechanise this or that operation. Their help in perfectioning the production can hardly be underestimated.

Engineers and technologists reorganise technological process, breaking up operations so that each one could be done by a blind workman. In doing this they must find the criterion of expediency at which the execution of an operation would remain sufficiently difficult to make the work interesting and not primitive. And another thing to be born in mind — the articles to be manufactured at a factory should be profitable and cost so as not to scare away the buyer.

Having implemented its main task — that of provision empioyment for all the blind, the Society tackled an extremely complicated problem of qualitative, rational employment of the blind, i. e. the problem of resolving a series of complex medical and production problems. What are the main of them?

Providing a blind person with a work which is recommended to him by the medical-labour expert commission.

Correct organisation of the working place and production as a whole that would ensure hundred per cent safety of work for the blind worker. High level of mechanisation which presupposes the development and introduction of special devices and appliances.

Proper solution of the problem of retention of poor sight, feeling of touch and hearing.

High culture of production and provision of favourable sanitary, hygienic and aesthetic labour conditions.

It is quite evident that it is impossible to ensure truly rational employment of the blind without due account of the requirements of oculists, physiologists and psychologists. That is why a large contingent of doctors along with production specialists are helping in the solution of the basic problem of the Society.

The solution of this problem would have been impossible without a wide-scale complex construction. Large profits netted by the Society's factories allow the Society to spend consideralbe funds on the construction of production, living, cultural and welfare buildings. Each year sees the commissioning of 180—200 thousand sq. m. of production buildings, 40—50 thousand sq. m. of living space, children's and cultural establishments. Capital construction allowed to resolve yet another problem — that of enlargement of small enterprises situated in small district centres which have no developed industries. The new trend in the expanding activities of the Society is the closing down such enterprises, shifting the blind to work in the newly built production buildings, providing them with living quarters situated nerby; erecting here cultural and children's establishments.

Concentration of production and enlargement of enterprises tend to improve their specialisation and to create solid material basis.

Almost all the Society's factories specialise in one or two products each. Moving-belts technique is introduced on a broad scale at the newly-built factories, especially in the assembly operations where most of the workers are blind.

600 blind students study annually at the higher and specialised schools of the Russian Federation. On nearly 4,000 blind engaged in intellectual work 500 are lecturers at higher and specialised schools, over 400 — teachers at

secondary schools, more than 1,000 — masters of music and choir circles.

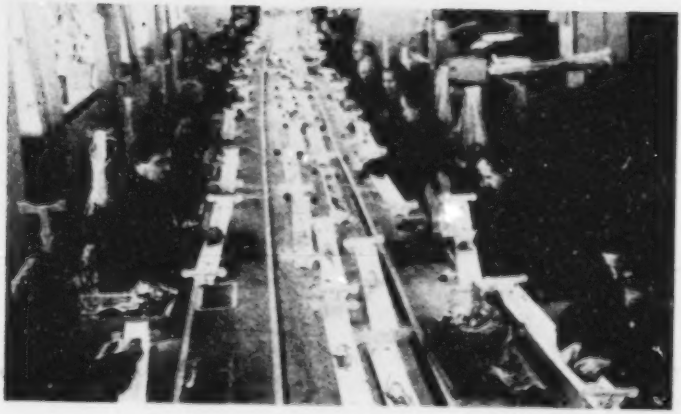
Among the blind there is a good many lawers, legal advisers, man of letters, operators of electronic computers and calculating machines and many other specialists.

28 blind and partially invalids working at higher schools and research centres are doctors and 100 candidates of sciences. By their effort these talented scientists promote Soviet science. An all-embracing system of social security, based on the principles of socialist humanism and democratism has been created in the Soviet Union in the years of Soviet Power.

Instead of charity and philanthropic activity of individuals or societies in the pre-Revolutionary Russia, social security in the Soviet Union became the most important state function, an inseparable part of the Soviet order.

Insurance in our contry being state and at the same time extremely social in character allows to cater to most varied requirements and needs of the eye-sight invalids.

Constant concern of the Soviet state creates favourble conditions for the development and consolidation of the All-Russia Society for the blind.



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The study and production factory in the town of Lubertsy:

The casting press line for making inserts for perfumery caps

The assembly line of industrial lamps

A blind worker cleaning wire ends on a mechanical device

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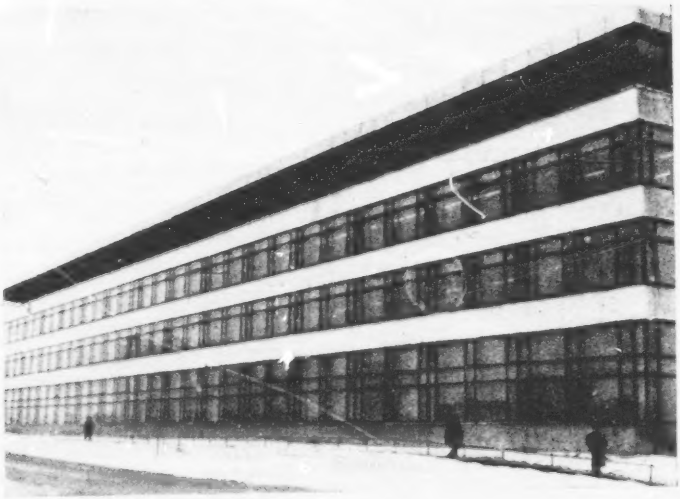
The study and production factory No. 8 in Moscow:
Assemblying electrical motors
A blind worker machining electrical motor rotors
The building of the factory No. 4 in Moscow



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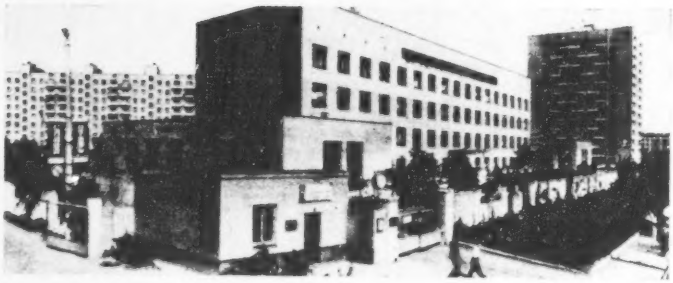
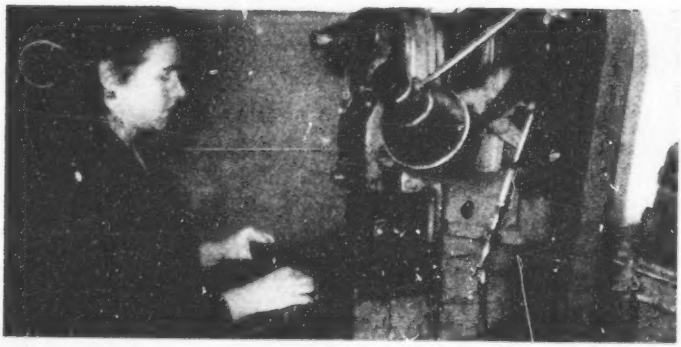
The study and production factory No. 11 in Moscow:

The factory building and dwelling houses built on the factory funds

Stamping parts for the electrical motors

A blind woman stamping small parts on the mechanical press





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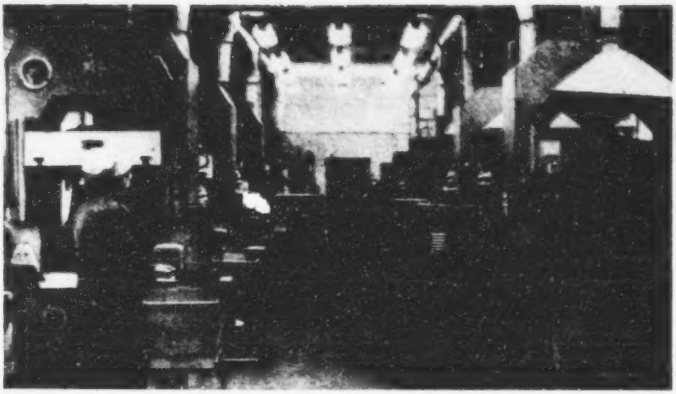
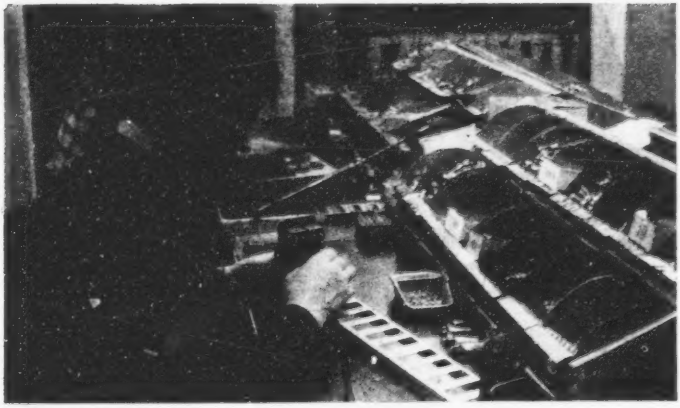
The study and production factory No. 5 in Leningrad:

A blind worker stamping terminals on the hydraulic press

Plastic parts are made in this shop

The study and production factory No. 3 in Leningrad. Assembling condensers for the telephone exhange stations





1 | 2 The study and production factory in Novgorod:
A blind worker beading rivets
Assembling TV set sweep transformers

1 | 2

The study and production factory in Krasnodar:
Winding coils for the master governers
Stamping parts for the rotary switches

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The school for restoration of eye-sight in Cheboksary:

A typing class

A class in housekeeping

At one of the laboratories of the Special Designing Bureau of the All-Russia Society for the Blind